



## **Five Ways to Get a Gig for Your Band**

by John Latimer

When it comes to finding work as a performing musician or a band, there are many different possibilities available for those musicians intent on completing this task, and here are five ways to get a gig for your band.

As a musician gains more and more fans, the easier it is to find a gig. Without any fans, the task is much more difficult. Let's face it, most talent buyers or club owners are not artist developers but saloon keepers. It's a blessing when a quality artist teams up with a quality artist developer, someone who believes in the band, someone who will work with you as you develop your stage performance and stage presence.

Without a talent buyer or promoter who will help a band get a "break," a band needs to make their career flourish by more hard work. Performance is one of the five main income sources for songwriters. (The others are: publishing, recording royalties, merchandise sales and synchronization licenses.) Therefore, it is imperative that a songwriter / musician focus on their career and maintain a professional attitude and prepare a quality presentation.

Without a doubt, the easiest gig to get is to volunteer your performance for a fundraising event or benefit. You might be surprised at the residual bookings that are generated from this kind of performance. If you are a quality performer, the people listening to your band will congratulate you after the gig. Make sure you have your business card ready. Pick a local charity and contact them to inquire about any upcoming events that they may have. Have your press kit ready as well as an EPK version (EPK = Electronic Press Kit) available on your website.

Another way for you to get a booking is to ask other bands if you may perform before them. Many times, other bands are delighted to have someone else "warm-up" the crowd for them. That's why they are called warm-up acts. Check your local performance listings and pick one that would be suitable for your band. Contact the band that is scheduled to perform, and ask them if your band may share the stage with them. If they agree, ask them to contact the promoter so your band name will be added to the promotion and publicity.

You may have heard the old line... "If you don't ask, the answer is no." This same adage applies for bookings. The best way to get your own booking is

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to make the call. Yes, get on the phone and call the talent buyer or promoter. You may not get the gig, but you will start to get name recognition by these “gatekeepers.” Hint: Be persistent but polite. Historically, the best day to call is Tuesday. Many promoters take Monday off after a long weekend. So, Tuesday, they are back at work.

A good way to get a gig outside of your market is to secure your own performance in your hometown and then gig-swap with another band from the city where you want to perform. Again, check the listings of bands performing in your target market, contact the band and make your pitch. You will find that many times these bands are in the same situation as you and want to get into your market. This works well especially if you can provide the other band a place to stay overnight. In addition, you will make new friends and contacts. Remember, this business is ALL about networking and relationships.

Lastly, many cities have agents who handle the local market. These are not agents who book tours but book local clubs in and around their city. Make sure you are on their target list. Call them, introduce yourself and describe what your band does. Many times, these agents book clubs exclusively and need a new band.

So, when you’re looking for a gig for your band, try one of these methods. Remember, your next gig may be based on your next phone call.

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